2/8/72

Dear Mary,

In what is still a slightly euphoric moment, Iwrite on Lil's behalf and at her request. We have just gotten home from Wilmington, where I had been acting as my own attorney ina suit to collect what one of the many crooked wholesalers owes me. In this case, what I had assembled was so impressive that a more than acceptable compromise was offered and accepted 10 minutes before the hearing was to have started. It is about 2/3 of the ~~prand~~ provable loss, half of what I'd sued for, to which they are adding all court costs. It will go on what we could not pay of last year's instalment of our indebtedness when the bank opens in the a.m. Returned with the check.

Lil dislikes any kind of travel. I stopped at the p.o. on the way to here office, which is so busy she went there for a bit more than 3 hours work before the end of the day. I gave her the mail when I got back to the car, there thumbed through it, disregarding a couple of orders, which means a small share of moola, was pleased when she saw you had addressed your letter to her, and was so delighted with it she read it alound to me while I drove. In fact, she lit up at least three times in the ten-minute trip to her office, said how nice it was to have friends pleased, and then asked me to write immediately because she will now be even more snowed under (she has built the business of the office she manages rather spectacularly and her busy season, two weeks onld, ordinarily would only now be showing signs of starting).

Her face has little reason to shine as it did these days. It is rare when she feels she has cause for such hapoiness as she showed, so I also oike it very much. Here again, the timing was perfect, for we had left a very bad situation in my wife, which is deeply attached to Lil, who reciprocates. My 8-year-old mother, having just gotten over two cataract operations and serious abdominal surgery, was suddenly confronted with caring for my 88-year-old stepfather who had a near-fatal gall-bladder attack. Two of his sons are very wealthy doctors near N.O.. When they found out he was difficult to handle after surgery, having kidding themselves about how hard the old man was to handle, took him down there. The older and wealthier, at least over a million, put up with it for two days and by then was so disagreeable to his own father than the puny wife of the other took him to her home, where she and her husband could not begin to cope with him. So, back to mom they packed him, and before lojg she had to institutionalize him for security, his own and that of others. There apparently is some irremedial brain damage from hardening of the arteries. So my mom has nothing except social security, a small savings account and his small pension. It costs her $5 a trip to go the the home in which she has him, and if she does not get a ride back, anohter five. This is upwards or $150 a month, sometimes twice that. When he has required private nurses at night, at $38 each he has them. The omnthly bill at the home is $550 plus extras. Of course, this has nothing to do with her own nursing, trying to keep his verminous kids contented, and uninterrupted stints of more than 12 heart-searing hours at a time just watching him at the hospital to keep him from hurting himself. He has fallen so many time it can't be counted, and how he hasn't broken more than a couple of ribs is a miracle I'll never solve. He is unaware of what he is doing. They have taken knives away from him, caught him wandering the grounds late at night, etc. He had never been such a person. Something has happened. But with this load, the millionaire one said merely that my mother could give up her apartment and independence to move in with my sister (which would also require stairs not good for her). This about a third of his fathers constant needs for what seems like the rest of his life could be met. Other than that, he has nothing to say. The second, under harrassment from his wife, has said he ll send $75.00 a month! And these are the rich ones. I didn't show how I boild on this and I did what ordinarily I would not have, told my mother what I want her to do. I told her to pay nothing any more. She has cleaned herself out to where should something like this happen to her she'd be the object of charity. I told her that if and when any check come, not to cash them but to take them to the home and sign them over to it. And to tell the home to bill the wealthy sons. I hope she will do it. They I have to get a copy of an unpaid bill. I think once this happens, the fone old man's waning years will be a financial burden on those best able to pay, with the greater, the physical and emotional burdern, where ti can't be avoided. You's t ink those swine would appreciate that their father has loving and diligent care, and regard that as

blessing. Anyway, with this what we had just left, can you imagine what joy your letter brought to Lil? For that, plus your excessive complements, I do thank you.

Now let me be a bit of a braggart and a bit indiscrete. Had you come up when you had planned to last labor day, you'd have had an even more beautiful one. But when my mother had 14 lbs taken out of her and we knew she'd be laying around most of the time when she got home (she was actually mothering the other patients on the thitd day!), Lil too the one she had made for you to mom, and then started one for you. With what she had or could get. She made it large enough on purpose, so Buck would not be discriminated againt and, I suspect, so it would accomodate certain side benefits for you!

Your estimate of the time it took is not exaggerated a bit. It gives you a measure of how Lil feels about you.

But this is not as you evaluatate it. I had nothing to do with it more than packaging and shipping it. It was all Lil's idea and, as I told you, she had one ready for you had you been able to keep your plan to come here last labor day. This was hers to you, purely that. Nothing of me and no repayment.

Anyway, thanks for warming us a bit. We do ap reciate it.

Lattimer: I don't know how abreast I've been keeping you. They laid a p,r, eggs on that, but whether more than that we can't know without knowing what they did it. I do know that other plans of which I have firm and advance knowledge have not come to pass, and I have a notion I have had something to do with that. Whey have gone too far, have done wrong and illegal things, I have caught them (and others), have a few rather ap ropriate confessions, and if I can now get help, will file both a tort action and civil suits for damages, to keep this is the area in which it belongs, not the area into which the government has been trying to shift it. What is involved is too much for me to think of it pro se. My door has not yet been brokendx down by candidates.

Glad to get the Graham story from your paper for the completeness of my file on its play. By and large it was not that good and the exceptional thing is that there was no second-day story, not even in the Times. Graham is less happy than he was. We have been in touch, as have Lattimer and I.

On Trapnell, I have the CD384 pp 1-6 only part. If you have the others, and I have a notion this started with you (I had another interested at the time), I'd ap reciate two copies, one for file and one to lend around. One reporter who was interested came up with the general, but thought him the father. He may carry it further. Another reporters has some interest, or had last week. I gave him what I have.

Gotta catch up on other mail. Enjoy, enjoy!

Many thanks, and best to all,